



Bill Draft 2015-MDz-6*: Create Veterans Task Force/PED Report.

2013-2014 General Assembly

Committee: Joint Legislative Program Evaluation
Oversight Committee

Date: December 17, 2014

Introduced by:

Prepared by: Ben Stanley

Analysis of: 2015-MDz-6*

Staff Attorney

SUMMARY: *Bill draft 2015-MDz-6 implements the recommendations of a recent report by the Program Evaluation Division by creating a Task Force for Veterans, Service Members, and Their Families, requiring the Task Force to implement a statewide strategic plan to improve services to these groups, and creating a legislative oversight committee to monitor implementation of the strategic plan.*

CURRENT LAW: In April of 2014 the Governor issued an executive order creating a Working Group on Veterans, Service Members and Their Families to develop interagency solutions to make North Carolina a more veteran friendly state. This Working Group does not exist in statute.

While there is a House standing committee on Homeland Security, Military, and Veterans Affairs, there is currently no joint legislative oversight committee charged with overseeing the provision of services to veterans, service members, and their families.

BILL ANALYSIS: **Section 1** of the bill draft establishes the Governor's Working Group in statute as the Task Force on Veterans, Service Members, and Their Families, in accordance with Recommendation 1 of the Program Evaluation Division's Report Number 2014-10. The Task Force is located in the Department of Administration and has 27 members, 16 of which are Ex Officio, 5 of which are appointed by the Governor, and 6 of which are appointed by the General Assembly. Task Force members elect a chair who calls meetings on a quarterly basis. The Task Force's duties include developing interagency solutions to make North Carolina a more veteran friendly state, raising awareness of services provided by participating agencies and organizations, tracking outcomes of services provided, and periodically making recommendations to the General Assembly and to the Governor.

In accordance with Recommendation 1 of the Report, **Section 2** of the bill draft requires a subcommittee of the Task Force to develop a strategic plan that defines the State's mission and vision for veterans, service members, and their families; identifies stakeholders; assesses strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges; formulates strategies for addressing these issues; and recommends ways to implement these strategies. The full Task Force is required to approve the plan by January 15, 2016, and to report the plan to the oversight committee created in Section 4 of the bill draft no later than April 15, 2016.

In accordance with Recommendation 1 of the Report, **Section 3** of the bill draft requires State agencies that provide a service, benefit, or discount that is targeted or directed at veterans, service members, or their families to collect and report to the Task Force information about the number of persons served, the type of benefit provided, sources of funding, and outcomes.

In accordance with Recommendation 2 of the Report, **Section 4** of the bill draft creates a new Joint Legislative Veterans and Military Service Members Oversight Committee. In addition to being charged

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with traditional oversight duties, the Committee is charged with reviewing reports by the Task Force created in Section 1 of the bill draft and monitoring implementation of the strategic plan developed pursuant to Section 2 of the draft. The Committee is allowed to make annual recommendations to the General Assembly and is required to submit a final report no later than April 1, 2022. The Committee ceases to exist on July 1, 2022.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The bill draft becomes effective when it becomes law.

BACKGROUND: The bill draft is based on the Program Evaluation Division report entitled *North Carolina Needs a Coordinated Strategy to Guide the Changing Landscape of Veterans Programs*, Report Number 2014-10 (September 2014).